

Message Text

PAGE 01 LUSAKA 00910 182050 Z

64

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-12 ADP-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 AID-20 SY-10 OPR-02 SCSE-00 SCA-01 OMB-01

A-01 M-03 CCO-00 SSO-00 EB-11 COME-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00

RSR-01 /160 W

----- 104580

O 181945 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8883

AMCONSULATE CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSULATE DURBAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

AMCONSULATE JOHANNESBURG IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 718

UNCLAS LUSAKA 0910 SECTION 1 OF 2

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, MOPS, RH, ZA

SUBJECT: ZAMBIAN COMMUNIQUE ON INVESTIGATION OF BORDER
SHOOTING INCIDENT

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

DEPARTMENT PASS USIA/ IAA

1. ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT ISSUED FOLLOWING COMMUNIQUE.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 LUSAKA 00910 182050 Z

2. " GOVERNMENT COMMUNIQUE ON THE SHOOTING INCIDENT IN THE
GORGES OF THE ZAMBEZI

TWO DAYS AGO THE ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT IT WAS

CARRING OUT INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE SHOOTING INCIDENT WHICH OCCURRED AT THE VICTORIA FALLS POWER STATION ON TUESDAY, 15 TH MAY, 1973. INVESTIGATIONS HAVE NOW BEEN DULY COMPLETED AND IT HAS BEEN FOUND THAT A SENTRY ON GUARD DUTY AT THE VITAL POWER STATION IN THE FOURTH GORGE OPENED FIRE WHICH RESULTED INTO THE REPORTED DEATHS OF TWO CANADIAN NATIONALS AND THE WOUNDING OF ONE AMERICAN MAN.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO GIVE THE BACKGROUND TO THE SITUATION WHICH LED TO SUCH AN UNHAPPY INCIDENT. SINCE U. D. I. IN 1965 ZAMBIA HAS BEEN UNDER ATTACK FROM THE REBEL REGIME IN SALISBURY AND ITS SUPPORTERS, ZAMBIA HAS BEEN A VICTIM OF COUNTLESS ACTS OF AGGRESSION PARTICULARLY ON THE BORDERS WITH MINORITY REGIMES. LAST YEAR IN SEPTEMBER, FOLLOWING RENEWED THREATS FROM SALISBURY, GOVERNMENT TOOK VERY STRICT SECURITY MEASURES WHICH INCLUDED THE GROUNDING OF ALL PRIVATE AIRCRAFT. THE ZAMBEZI RIVER WAS DECLARED A RESTRICTED AREA AND ALL WATERCRAFTS USING THE ZAMBIAN SIDE OF THE ZAMBEZI WERE GROUNDED.

THE SECURITY MEASURES TAKEN AT THAT TIME REMAIN IN FORCE TO DATE. THESE MEASURES WERE INDEED JUSTIFIED LATER IN THAT YEAR AND PARTICULARLY SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS YEAR WHEN THE SMITH REGIME INCREASED ITS ACTS OF AGGRESSION AGAINST ZAMBIA AND HER PEOPLE. BEFORE THE BORDER CLOSURE ON THE 9 TH OF JANUARY THIS YEAR, THIS NATION WITNESSED POLITICAL SUBVERSION AND DISSENSION, ECONOMIC STRANGULATION, SABOTAGE AND DIRECT MILITARY ATTACK PARTICULARLY IN BORDER AREAS. MANY SPIES HAVE BEEN ARRESTED IN ZAMBIA WORKING FOR REBEL RHODESIA AND SOUTH AFRICA. ZAMBIA STILL FACES THE RHODESIAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN ARMIES BASED IN RHODESIA. THERE ARE MILITARY CAMPS ON THE RHODESIAN SIDE OF THE VICTORIA FALLS AREA INCLUDING THE GORGES. THE TARGET IS ZAMBIA, ITS VITAL INSTALLATIONS AND ALL ITS PEOPLE.

THE LANDMINES PLANTED BY REBEL FORCES IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CLOSURE OF THE BORDER CLAIMED THIRTEEN ZAMBIAN LIVES AND LEFT SCORES OF INNOCENT ZAMBIANS MAIMED. ALL THESE INCIDENTS, TOGETHER WITH THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE REBELLION IN RHODESIA, HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TENSION EXISTING ON THE ZAMBEZI RIVER. THE EXISTENCE OF THIS TENSION WAS CONFIRMED BY THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY

COUNCIL MISSION AND THE ENTIRE WORLD HAS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 LUSAKA 00910 182050 Z

SITUATION ON THE RHODESIA/ ZAMBIA BORDER IS DANGEROUS. IT IS DANGEROUS TO PEACE AND SECURITY, IT IS DANGEROUS TO LIFE ALONG THE ENTIRE 743 KILOMETRE BORDER WITH REBEL RHODESIA.

THERE HAVE BEEN NUMEROUS VIOLATIONS OF OUR TERRITORY BY AIR, BY LAND AND BY WATER ALONG THE ZAMBIAN/ RHODESIAN FRONTIER. INDEED, EXCEPT FOR THE MAXIMUM RESTRAINT EXERCISED BY THE ZAMBIAN ARMED FORCES, THE EXISTING TENSION COULD HAVE ALREADY ERUPTED INTO AN OPEN CONFLICT. DESPITE CALCULATED PROVOCATIONS WE IN ZAMBIA HAVE REFUSED TO PLAY INTO THE HANDS OF RECKLESS AND LAWLESS MEN.

IT IS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND OF GROWING TENSION IN THIS REGION AND PARTICULARLY ON THE ZAMBEZI THAT THE TUESDAY INCIDENT MUST BE VIEWED. THE INVESTIGATIONS HAVE REVEALED THAT AT 1430 HOURS AN OFFICER OF THE

ZAMBIA ARMY ON GUARD DUTY AT THE POWER STATION SUDDENLY NOTICED FOUR PERSONS WHO, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, LOOKED LIKE MEN. THE SENTRY OBSERVED THAT THEY WERE MOVING AT THE EDGE OF THE WATER, DEEP IN THE GORGE. THEY WERE MOVING IN A SINGLE FILE ON THE RHODESIAN SIDE BUT

TOWARDS THE BEND OPPOSITE THE POWER STATION. THE SENTRY NOTICED THAT THESE FOUR PERSONS WERE WEARING SWIMMING COSTUMES WITH WHAT APPEARED TO BE BANDOLEERS OR WATERPROOF GEAR FOR PROTECTING EXPLOSIVES. THE MOVEMENT

OF THESE PEOPLE AND THEIR INTENSE INTEREST IN THE SCENERY ON THE ZAMBIAN

BANKS APPEARED VERY SUSPICIOUS. AFTER REACHING THE BEND ONE OF THE PERSONS REMAINED BEHIND WHILE THREE OF THEM PROCEEDED ROUND IT AND REACHED A ROCK. ON REACHING THE ROCK WHERE THE CURRENT APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN SLOW THE THREE GOT INTO THE WATER AND BEGAN TO SWIM TOWARDS THE " SILENT POOL " WHICH IS ON THE ZAMBIAN SIDE OF THE ZAMBEZI.

AS ONE OF THEM REMAINED BEHIND THE SENTRY IMMEDIATELY FELT THAT THERE COULD HAVE BEEN ANOTHER GROUP GIVING COVER TO THE FOUR AND THEREFORE HAD TO TAKE THE NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS. FROM THEIR ACTIONS IT BECAME EVIDENT TO HIM THAT THEY WERE ON A MISSION TO ATTACK THE POWER

STATION WHICH ONE OF THE MOST VITAL INSTALLATIONS IN ZAMBIA AND THE ONLY ONE IN THE AREA.

IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES THE SENTRY FELT COMPELLED TO ACT SWIFTLY. HE FIRED ON THE SWIMMERS WHO BY THAT TIME WERE IN ZAMBIAN WATERS. ONE OF THEM IMMEDIATELY DISAPPEARED UNDER THE CURRENT WHILE THE OTHER TWO STRUGGLED AGAINST THE CURRENT TOWARDS THE RHODESIAN BANKS. THE FOURTH PERSON WHO REMAINED ON THE RHODESIAN BANKS OF THE ZAMBEZI WAS UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 LUSAKA 00910 182050 Z

RUNNING AWAY AND THE GUARDSMAN DID NOT FIRE AT THIS PERSON. THE GUARDSMAN WITHDREW FOR COVER AND, WITH HIS COLLEAGUES, KEPT THE AREA UNDER GENERAL OBSERVATION.

AN HOUR LATER THE GUARDSMEN NOTICED ONLY ONE PERSON WAS LYING ON THE ROCK, THE OTHER ONE HAD DISAPPEARED. NO FURTHER ACTION WAS TAKEN BY THEM ON THAT DAY.

THE FOLLOWING DAY THEY NOTICED THAT THE BODY ON THE ROCK HAD DISAPPEARED.

IN ASSESSING THESE EVENTS IT IS IMPORTANT TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THAT:

FIRST: THE ZAMBEZI RIVER IS AN AREA OF TENSION.
SECOND: THE AREA IN WHICH THE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE IS VERY EXCLUSIVE AND INACCESSIBLE TO TOURISTS AND CASUAL VISITORS. EVER NELSON

UNCLASSIFIED

NMAFVVZCZ

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 10 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LUSAKA00910
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: LUSAKA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730560/abqcefvo.tel
Line Count: 157
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03-Aug-2001 by reddocgw>; APPROVED <20-Aug-2001 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 980219
Subject: ZAMBIAN COMMUNIQUE ON INVESTIGATION OF BORDER SHOOTING INCIDENT
TAGS: CASC, MOPS, RH, ZA
To: STATE
CAPE TOWN
DURBAN
BLANTYRE
GABORONE IMMEDIATE
JOHANNESBURG
LONDON

OTTAWA
PRETORIA
ADDIS ABABA
USUN N Y

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005